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**No. 6**

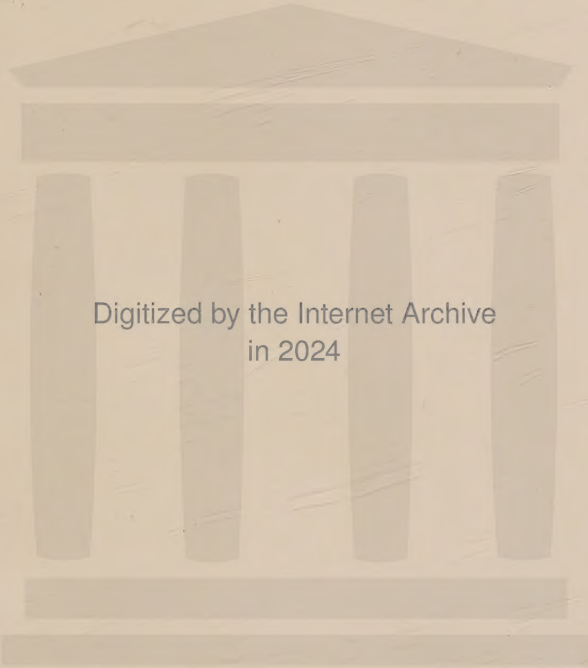
**ARMAGEDDON**

**OR**

**THE LAST WAR**







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*PROPHECY INVESTIGATION SOCIETY*

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ARMAGEDDON

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# ARMAGEDDON

OR, THE LAST WAR.

BY THE

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Languages at the University of Edinburgh.  
Head of the London Mission, London Jews' Society.*

WITH FOREWORD

BY THE

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gives its general approval to this  
publication as a useful contribution  
to the study of the subject, but  
does not of necessity endorse or  
commit itself to every view or  
interpretation or statement put  
forth by the author.*

## FOREWORD

THIS little book is published at an opportune moment. The dark days of crisis through which we are passing, the unprecedented events of the world-war, the drama of history actually unfolding before our eyes in the East of Europe—all these things must awaken anxieties and enquiries in the most careless observer. At such a time the foreshadowings of Holy Scripture, so far as they may be traced by the reverent and prayerful student, cannot but command unusual interest. The author is to be congratulated not only on the line of interpretation he has adopted, but on the sane and moderate tone which characterizes his treatment of these great themes. The first chapter of his book is devoted to a careful and instructive study of its title, Armageddon. The word itself, as he reminds us, has been,

since the outbreak of the present war, continually on the lips of people who have perhaps but little conception of its meaning. Mr. Titterton's explanation is illuminating and exhaustive, and this feature of his book should be in itself sufficient to commend it to the average reader.

The titles of further chapters in the volume indicate the many points of interest dealt with. "The Valley of Jehoshaphat," "The Euphrates dried up," "The Kings of the East," etc., all suggest to the student of prophecy subjects of interest, and on all of these valuable information is supplied. I will not anticipate the perusal of the book by summarizing its conclusions. But I may say that light is thrown by its pages upon the future of the great country of Russia, now so happily our Ally, and upon the part Great Britain may be called to play in the Return of the Jews to their own land. Mr. Titterton is an expert in Jewish lore and, as might be expected, he has enriched his book by a catena of quotations from Rabbinical Literature on the final struggles of the age and the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of Messiah. The

book will be found useful by all students of prophecy, and I would heartily commend it to all who are looking for guidance and help from the Scripture of Truth in these difficult days.

EDW. W. MOORE.

WIMBLEDON,

*December 1, 1915.*



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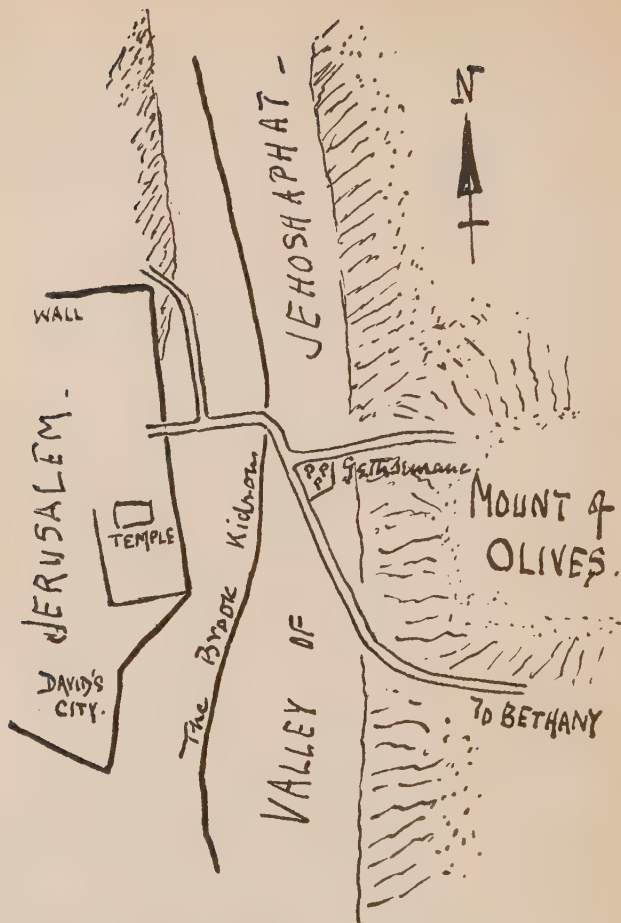
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Showing the Relation of  
Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives.

# ARMAGEDDON

## CHAPTER I

### ARMAGEDDON

FEW words have been so frequently on the lips of thinking men during the past few months of this the world's *greatest war* as the word ARMAGEDDON,<sup>1</sup> although often used without any conception of its real meaning. But there is a feeling that it describes what to many seems to be, or closely to resemble, that last great war pictured in the Bible, which must take place before the establishing of the Millennium Kingdom. The likeness consists in its extent, its ferocity, and the utter apostasy of at least one of the combatants; together with its effect on the Jews, three-quarters of whom reside in the war zone; whilst the

<sup>1</sup> See Note A.

Turkish Empire, of which Palestine is a part, is vitally involved.

The moving of the nations towards Palestine is suggestive of most crucial coming events, and brings into near view the possible early fulfilment of Bible promises and prophecies, of which the world at large takes little or no cognizance.

To the Christian, more especially to him who loves the prophetic word, the events of this present time are fraught with much meaning, and, may we not add, with comfort too. For in the midst of the "gross darkness that covers the people" he hears the Master saying, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Matt. xxi. 28).

So though the present war, "world-wide" though it be, cannot from Scripture, as we shall see, be held to be the great Armageddon; yet arising out of it, and from other most certain signs, we feel confident that we have arrived at "the hinge of the age," the end of this dispensation, and that we are on the brink of most mighty coming events; that

the coming of the Lord for His Church draws near—how near we know not; that the Jews are on the verge of returning to Palestine; and that the present war is but the presage of a still more awful one, for every war of man is but the preparation for a still greater one, made greater and more awful by science and invention.

### **Where the word Armageddon is found**

The position of the word Armageddon in the Book of the Revelation is most marked, for it closes the account of the vial poured out by the sixth angel, the prophecy reading as follows: "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And they gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (Rev. xvi. 12-16).

### Armageddon—a Symbol

In treating of this subject we remind ourselves that the Apocalypse, or Book of the Revelation, is "a book of mysteries; things are represented by signs; realities are veiled." So the word "Armageddon" used by the Apostle John (and only used here) is a picture connecting some most vital historical events, of which it is the expression, with a yet wider set of circumstances, embracing, as we shall see, practically the whole so-called civilized world.

### What the Word means

It will help us first of all to consider the meaning of the word Armageddon. We note that it is held by many to be *one word*,

though a compound, while others regard it as two words, and read accordingly.

Taking the readings of the Hexapla, we find it written, without exception, as *one* word, with or without the aspirate :

Greek, Ἀρμαγεδών ; Syriac, Armagedon ; Latin, Hermagedon ; English, Armageddon ; German, Harmageddon ; French, Armageddon.

Noted textual critics prefer either Ἀρμαγεδδών or Ἀρμαγεδών, i.e. Harmageddon or Harmagedon ; or else divide the word and read Ἀρ Μαγεδών, Har-Magedon.<sup>1</sup> And this last perhaps is the most generally received reading, the word " Har " being the Hebrew for " mountain," whilst Magedon is practically unanimously referred to the town or valley of Megiddo or Megiddon mentioned in Judg. v. 19, Zech. xii. 11, and other passages of Scripture.

Should the reading " Ar-Megiddon " be preferred, the meaning would be " city of Megiddon," the word " Ar " being a Hebrew form for " city." Such combination with " Ar " occurs in Num. xvi. 28, " Ar-Moab " ; and elsewhere are found the transliterations Ἀρ

<sup>1</sup> See Note A.

Σιών, Ἀρμαριζειν. Thus the word Armageddon as it stands signifies the "city" or "mountain" of *Megiddo* or *Megiddon*.

### Megiddo or Megiddon

It will help us next to briefly view the circumstances in Scripture under which it is used. The root of the word מְגִדּוֹן, Megiddon,<sup>1</sup> is (גָּדַר), *to cut, penetrate, break in upon*, whence we get the derivatives גָּדַר, גְּדוּר, a *troop*, symbolizing the dashing or cutting of troops through their foes, with special reference to the armoured chariot;<sup>2</sup> e.g. "Gad, a troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last," גָּד גְּדוּר יִגְדֹּנֵנִי וְהוּא יִגְדַּר עָקֵב (Gen. xlix. 19). The word is also used in Mic. v. 1 of gathering together in crowds or troops.

Thus Megiddo may very well mean, "Troop

<sup>1</sup> See Note B.

<sup>2</sup> The following comment occurs in the Beresh-Rab.: "When Jacob saw that Samson (from the tribe of Dan) would die, whom he thought would redeem his people, he said, 'This one will not bring redemption, but one from Gad, as is said Gad, (גָּד), a troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last.' Elijah will gather the people."

Town," "Place of Troops," or, if referring to the fact of "cutting through," may signify "Town of Slaughter" or "Carnage." Either derivation suggests the "decisiveness" of the battles there fought, stamping the Valley of Megiddo as a very "valley of decision." For this it has proved itself to be time and again, as we shall see, and points in a menacing way to the last great war ushering in the Day of the Lord in vengeance.

### The History of Megiddo

In history the word Megiddo takes us back to the inception of Israel as a people, and its great collision with the heathen nations, more especially Canaan, the type of the godless world-power.

So Armageddon symbolizes the *apostate* world-power, which has forsaken its Creator to worship the creature. And as in the past it represented, so in the future it symbolizes, "praise to the Lord for the avenging of Israel" (Judg. v. 2), in the latter days—in the days of the gathering of the nations of the world against Jerusalem, according to the promise of prophecy, "Then shall the

Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle (Zech. xiv. 3 ; cf. Joel iii. 1, 2, 12, 14, 16).

*Summary.*—In a word, Megiddo suggests great historical events, and being itself an old Canaanitish capital city, points to the old heathen or Gentile world-power or influence, and this especially in its aspect towards the Israelitish people, to which it (Canaan) showed constant hostility.

It is the “world power” against God’s power—the people of the world against God’s people. “The kings came and fought ; then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo” (Judg. v. 19), prophetic of the future contest.

### **Why was Megiddo chosen and used as a Symbol of the Future ?**

Its position as a town was unique, described as “at the end of a spur that runs out from the ridge of Carmel into the plain, and is a conspicuous feature in the landscape.” The plain is the great plain of Esdraelon, called by St. Jerome “the plain of Megiddo.”

Megiddo was thus on the edge of the Bible world's great battlefield.

The two special features of Megiddo as a city were (*a*) that it was a "hill-town," lying at the foot of Mount Carmel (הר כרמל); and (*b*) that it lay close to the great plain, of which it commanded the northern entrance. The great central plain of Palestine does not get its name from Megiddo, but from Jezreel, which has also a typical meaning, viz. "God soweth." This in the first place is *literally* true, as the plain is the most fertile part of the land of Canaan, and is secondly symbolic of the sowing of death.

These two towns, Megiddo and Jezreel (or Esdraelon, which is the Greek form of the word), play a prominent part in Scripture history, and both are intimately connected with the plain. This plain derived its importance both from its *extent* and *topographical* surroundings. Likened to a triangle with sides of 20 miles by 15 by 15, running from Haifa to the Jordan Valley, it offered great scope to military endeavour. The barrier of hills which surrounded it on every side was pierced by five passes, of which the town

of Jezreel guarded that on the eastern side and Megiddo the northern approach. This configuration rendered it an ideal battleground; *the most noted in Scripture history.*

### Great Battles fought there

The chief battles fought upon or near the plain in the neighbourhood of Megiddo are as follows :—

1. It was there that Sisera fought Barak, who went down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men after him: "Then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo" (Judg. v. 19).

2. Gideon fought there for Israel, "when the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the Valley of Jezreel" (Judg. vi. 33).

3. There Saul and Jonathan made their last stand, before they were driven back by the Philistines and perished on Mount Gilboa near by (1 Sam. xxxi.).

4. There good King Josiah came to a sad end in his fight against Pharaoh Necho, who

was marching from Egypt to Carchemish and the Euphrates. He fought and was wounded to death, and was carried to Jerusalem, where he died (2 Kings xxiii. 30; 2 Chron. xxxv. 20-27).

5. It was nearby, too, on the western border, on the edge of the Plain of Esdraelon, that Elijah had his great controversy with the priests of Baal, and the great decision was made יהוה הוא הוא האלהים (1 Kings xviii. 39), "*Jehovah, He is the God.*"

6. Ahaziah, when fleeing from Jehu, who had killed Joram, "fled to Megiddo and died there" (2 Kings ix. 27).

Zech. xii. 11 seems to allude to the sad occurrence of King Josiah's death in the words, "As the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of (Sept. plain) Megiddon"; while the battle of Magdolum mentioned by Herodotus (ii. 159) has been suggested as a reference to the same event.

### Esdraelon

Esdraelon has always been a fascinating plain to the historian, and the following short account gives a comprehensive idea of the

mixed multitudes that have from time to time waged war there.

"In the first ages of Jewish history, as well as during the Roman Empire and the Crusades, and even in later times, it has been the scene of many a memorable contest."

"It has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in this country (Palestine), from the days of Nebuchadonosor, King of the Assyrians, in the history of whose war with Arphaxad it is mentioned as *the Great Plain of Esdraelon* (Judith i. 8), until the disastrous march of the late Emperor Napoleon Buonaparte from Egypt to Syria.

Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Christian Crusaders, and anti-Christian Frenchmen, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, and Arabs, warriors *out of every nation which is under heaven*, have pitched their tents in the plain of Esdraelon, and have beheld the various banners of their nations wet with the "dews of Tabor and Hermon" (pp. 53, 54, Horne).

*Megiddo*, in a word, stands, therefore, as the Bible symbol of *the world's great battle-field*, or "valley of decision."

## NOTE A

The following shows the early belief in "Har," mountain, as the first word in the compound expression read *Armageddon* in the A.V. "In the Scriptures places take their names either of some notable adventure, or by some notable mischance. As, for example, the grave of lust in Num. xi. 34; Meriboth, or the waters of strife, Num. xx. 24; and other like in the Scriptures. So also doth Armageddon by prevention in this place, which may be interpreted the army of wasting or slaughter: representing even by the unlucky name of it what shall befall at length to the army of Antichrist. Jerome interpreteth Armageddon to be a certain mountain, where the Israelites were wont to pitch their tents. Other think rather that Armageddon should be called 'Gospel Hill,' or the 'Hill of Glad Tidings,' or 'Apple Hill,' or the 'Hill of Choice Fruits.' And truly the kings and princes of the earth have none other quarrel to fight against the godly, but only for Christ's gospel, whereunto all power ought to be subject."

## NOTE B

## CHARIOTS AND CUTTING THROUGH

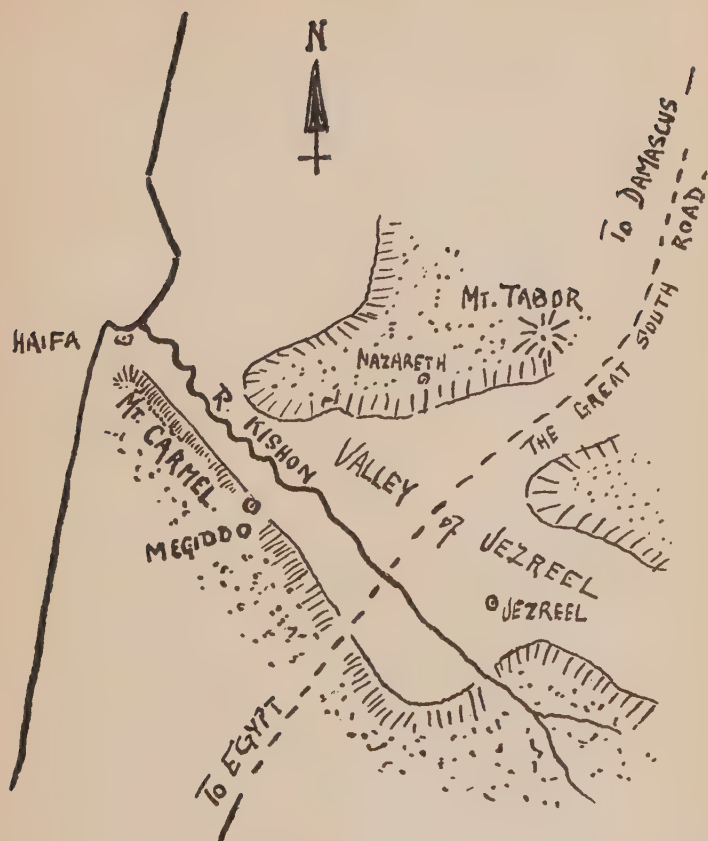
It seems probable that Megiddo took its name from the war chariots which came

sweeping down the plain. Armed with hooks, scythes, and spikes of iron, they were deadly engines of war in early days, cutting up whole ranks of enemies in their furious rushes. The following accounts bear this out. Robinson, "Antiquities of Greece," 1887, says: "There were also chariots called *δρεπανοφοροι*, because armed with hooks or scythes, with which whole ranks of soldiers were cut down." Chariots were the "nations'" strongest and cruellest weapon of offence. Israel was encouraged *not to put confidence in them*, but *to trust in the Lord*. Cf. Deut. xx. 1-4, the advice given to Israel for war. See also Josh. xi. 6 for the command respecting captured chariots and horses. Chariots with scythes were in use for many ages in all eastern countries. Such are mentioned in 2 Macc. xiii. 2, which the King of Syria used against Israel. They were used by the Persians, as is recorded by Xenophon (*Anabasis*, lib. i. cap. 8). Cæsar records their use by ancient Britons (*De Bello Gallico*, v. 19). They were used to break enemies' battalions. An old English account says: "A chariot was a certaine engine of warre, made with long and sharpe pikes of iron, set in the forefront, and with three sharpe pointed swords on either side. And behind it had sharp crooked yrons made much like sithes or rather like sickles for the crookednesse thereof, and of

these manner of sharp yrons they are called in the first of Judicum (Judges) and divers other places of the Olde Testament *currus falcati*, sickle carts. The horses that did draw cartes were wel harnessed, and especiallie the men that rode upon them. These chariots were a terrible kinde of engine, and in great price among the Aegyptians, as it appeareth by King Pharao, when he followed the children of Israel with 600 of chosen chariots. And in what estimation they were in among the Philistines, ye shall find in the first Booke of the Kings, 13 chapter, that they came against King David with thirtie thousand chariots beside other horsemen and warriors a great number. Vigetius in his third book *de re militari* saith that the chariots were most used of Darius, Antiochus, and Mithridates, etc."—*Nation. Encycl.*, Art. "Chariots"; *Encycl. Brit.*, Art. "Chariots."

"Judicum i. 19. 'Because they had yron chariots.' He that shall reade the Iliades of Homer shall earlie perceive that the men in the olde time used chariots in Battailles, and also the same may be gathered both out of the most ancient histories and also out of the latest writers; and amongst others, Quintus Curtius, writing the life of Alexander, doth plainlie make mention of such chariots in the battle fought against Darius. But I thinke no writer writeth more plainlie of them than

doeth Plinie. For he in that battaile wherein Antiochus was overcome of the Romans, which is in the 4 Decade and 7 booke, thus described chariots which he calleth hooked. He saith they were chiefly fensed after this manner. The points about the draught tree standing out from the yoke had as it were hornes wherewith whatsoever they met they might thrust it through; and two hookes hung out at the ende of the cart, the one even with the cart, the other fastened downwards to the earth. The former served to cut asunder whatever came on the side of it, the other was made to crush them which fell down and went under. There were also two sundrie hookes fastened after the same sort to the axel trees of both the wheeles, etc. The use therefore of these chariots endured till ye time that Antiochus was overcome. And that they were horrible to behold and hard to be conquered maie manifestlie be gathered by the booke of Josua: for there in the 17 chapter when the tribe of Joseph complained because it was so manie in number and had obtained so narrow a lot, Josua commanded this, that if they had not roome enough they should go and dwell or els conquer the place of their enemies adjoining unto them. They excused themselves yt they could not doe so because their neighbours had yron chariots."—Pet. Mar. upon Judic., fol. 32.



## THE VALLEY OF JEZREEL.



## CHAPTER II

### THE VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT

#### Jerusalem the Centre of Siege

It was Hippolytus who long ago (A.D. 160–236) understood the Valley of Jehoshaphat to be represented by Armageddon, if a twofold literal interpretation is demanded.

Though the war is to be in “the land,” and over a wide area of the world, yet the *decision* is to be at Jerusalem. Thus (a) “Jerusalem is to be trodden down of the Gentiles, *till* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” (b) According to the prophet Joel (ch. iii.), God says, “For, behold, in those days and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for My people and for

My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted My land" (verses 1, 2, and verses 9, 10, 11). "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about" (verse 12). Verse 13: "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision (קִרְיָץ): for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision" (verse 14). So if the plain or valley of Jezreel, or Megiddo, was the old world place of "decision," Scripture teaches that the issue of Armageddon will be decided at another valley, and that the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

### **The Valley of Jehoshaphat: Where is it?**

Like Megiddo and Jezreel, the word Jehoshaphat has both a symbolic and an actual meaning, "Jehovah judges." It points backwards, as it would appear, to that remarkable miraculous interposition of God as recounted in 2 Chron. xx. 20-30, when Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir were judged, "which were come against Judah"; when Jehoshaphat and his people stood still and saw "the salvation of the Lord" (verse 17);

when the valley of praise became the "valley of blessing" (עֲמִי בִרְכָה). It is prophetic, too, of the time when God will judge the nations, and save His people *in the same miraculous way*.

The situation of the Valley of Jehoshaphat of to-day is most suggestive, since it separates the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem, the brook (נַחַל) Kidron running between the two mounts. It is to be "the valley of decision," (תְּרוּן). The root of this word, like the root of Megiddo, meaning "to cut in," though here in a judicial sense. For the valley is to be "the valley of judgment" (Sept. *δικεως*), and the judgment is the Lord's, "for there will I sit to judge" (Joel iii. 12).

*Evidence in favour of the above.*—The pages of profane history contain one or two references to this valley, e.g. the Pilgrim of Bordeaux (333 A.D.) believed the valley to be "to the left of those going from Jerusalem to the gate which is against the east, that they may ascend Mount Olivet," while Antoninus Martyr is said to use the term "Valley of Gethsemane" as synonymous with the "Valley of Jehoshaphat."

## The Mount of Olives<sup>†</sup> and the Valley of Gethsemane

The use of the phrase "Valley of Gethsemane" is not unnatural, when we remember the position of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, and also the pre-eminent position which it holds in Scripture. A glorious promise yet to be fulfilled is predicted of it in Zech. xiv. 4.

It was also a remarkable "mount" in the eyes of the old Rabbis, a place of future resurrection of the dead of all Israel, while Rabbis in later times have been led to write much about it. We thus conclude that should "Armageddon" refer to a mountain, nothing in Scripture so fulfils the thought of a "mountain of decision" as does that of Olivet, especially in the light of Zech. xiv. 4, while the evidence of the New Testament is overwhelming and undeniable.

In the New Testament no place calls forth such undying memories as Olivet. For it was the mount whither Jesus was accustomed to resort.

<sup>†</sup> See Note.

It was "as Jesus sat upon the Mount of Olives" that He opened up to His disciples the future, and the terrible events at "the end of the age," "nation rising against nation," etc. (Matt. xxiv. ; Luke xxi.).

It was from the Mount of Olives that Jesus rode as a king into Jerusalem, while the multitude cried "Hosannah to the Son of David" (Matt. xxi. 9).

It was after the institution of the Last Supper that Jesus went out into the Mount of Olives to the garden called Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 30, 36), and went through that awful agony (*ἀγωνία*), or spiritual conflict, of which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb. v. 7); stamping this mount to all time as the scene of conflict and victory, and of eternal weight of glory.

It was from this mount that the Lord Jesus ascended into heaven, and to which He will return (Acts i. 12). "This same Jesus, which

is taken up into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen Him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath-day's journey."

Jesus, too, at Bethany, on Olivet, worked that great miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead, and announced Himself as the Resurrection and the Life (John xi.), while from Bethany He ascended to heaven.

In these last events we see Ezek. xi. 23<sup>1</sup> literally fulfilled—"and the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain, which is on the *east side* of the city," i.e. upon the Mount of Olives. In the near future will come to pass, when Armageddon is at its climax, the remarkable prophecy of Zech. xiv. 3, 4: "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And

<sup>1</sup> Commenting on Ezek. xi. 23, Rab. Janna said: "The Shekinah stood 3½ years on Olivet, and preached, saying, 'Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near'" (Mid. Thillim); and that when all was in vain it returned to its own place.

His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west. . . . And the Lord my God shall come, and all His saints with Him." So valley and mountain and city point to the Coming of Christ, whose glorious appearing shall overwhelm His enemies and bring salvation to His suffering people.

#### NOTE ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

It is mentioned in 2 Sam. xv. 30 as the "Ascent of Olivet." "And David went up by the Ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up" (cf. Joseph. Ant. 7. 9. 2). In 2 Kings xxiii. 13 it is called "the Mount of Corruption," *הר המושחת*, lit. the Mount of the Destroyer, this name being gained from Solomon's idolatrous high places and worship, and the destruction of the high places by Josiah. The margin of A.V. says, "i.e. the Mount of Olives." The word *המִשְׁחִית*, the destroyer, seems to point to 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, where the "destroying angel," *מלאך המושחת*, stretched out his hand over Jerusalem to destroy it. Also to Exod. xii. 23, the destroyer "passing through the land of Egypt" (verse 12), the same word being used,

It is also used with reference to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in Jer. li. 25, where God says, "Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyed all the earth": הִנְנִי אֵלֶיךָ הַר הַמְשִׁחִית (cf. verses 34-36). נֶאֱמַר יְהוָה הַמְשִׁחִית אֶת-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ. The Mount of Olives has also been called by various other names of suggestive meaning, e.g. "the Mount of Oil," "the Mountain of the Lights," "the Mount of the Three Lights," i.e. the Temple, the Rising Sun, and the Oil of the Olive Trees.

## CHAPTER III

### THE EUPHRATES DRIED UP

#### Its Relation to Armageddon

I. THE EUPHRATES.—“And the water thereof (of the great river Euphrates) was dried up, that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared” (Rev. xvi. 12). The significance of this expression is immense. The Euphrates was one of the great boundary rivers marking off the heathen or Gentile world from the “Promised Land,” the land promised to Abram (Gen. xv. 18). Now a river is the strength or power of a land or of a city, a natural barrier; or, as often the case, an impassable defence. It often represented the land through which it flowed, e.g. the Nile for Egypt. The river Euphrates was the dividing line, clear and marked, between Israel and those “beyond the river,” who

were idolaters and enemies, though used by God as a scourge, as occasion necessitated. For example, Josh. xxiv. 2, "Your fathers dwelt *beyond the river* (חנהר) in old time . . . and they served other gods." Abram had come out from among them (Gen. xiv. 13), and the word "Hebrew" (עברי) describes his life "beyond" the river.

Instances illustrating the "scourge" are (Isa. vii. 20 and x. 5): "In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them *beyond the river*, by the King of Assyria." "The Assyrian, the rod of Mine anger."

2. DRIED UP.—The term *to dry up* is used in Scripture in two senses, *literal* and *symbolic*.

(1) *Literal*.—Josh. iv. 23 is a good example of the literal drying up. "For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until you were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up from before us, until we were gone over" (cf. Exod. xiv. 21; xv. 8; Josh. iii. 16).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Note,

(2) *Symbolic*.—The river is a symbol for a nation, so then “drying up” refers to such. For example, it is said of

(a) *Babylon*: “My blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry” (Jer. li. 35, 36). “The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land” (verses 42, 43). “. . . A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols” (l. 38). All this is said of Babylon, who is described in Jer. li. 13 as “dwelling upon many waters,” i.e. ruling over many peoples: “O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness.”

(b) *Of Assyria*: “Now, therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the River, strong and many, even the King of Assyria and all his glory” (Isa. viii. 7).

This needs no explanation. The destruction of Assyria is equally simply described in symbolic language: "And all the deeps of the river shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down" (Zech. x. 11).

(c) *Of Egypt*: The same imagery is also used of Egypt: "And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up" (the Nile). This indicates the doom of Egypt. Compare, too, in these connections, Isa. xi. 15, 16; xlv. 27; li. 10; Jer. l. 38; li. 36; Ps. cxiv. 3; and Judith v. 13.

To sum up, we gather that in the passages under consideration the Euphrates is taken as the symbol of a Power issuing from the banks of that river, prior to Armageddon, whose "drying up" or removal prepares the way for the coming of hostile hosts against "the land."

In the following chapter we shall endeavour to show what this Power (or Powers) is, and why the symbol "Kings of the East" is used.

#### NOTE

2 Esdras xiii. 40-44 recounts in an interesting way how the ten tribes were taken as

captives by the King of Assyria *over the waters* to another land, where they took counsel to leave and seek a new one, where they might keep their statutes. "And they entered *the Euphrates* by the narrow passage of the river. For the Most High there showed signs for them and held still the flood till they were passed over."

[This is partly a traditional statement.]

## CHAPTER IV

### THE KINGS OF THE EAST

THE promise to Abram was the land "from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates." The Euphrates was thus the boundary and also the barrier between Israel and the hostile Gentile nations. Both Assyria and Babylonia were on the east side of the river.

The east was "famous or infamous" for its soothsayers and diviners (cf. Num. xxiii. 7 ; Deut. xxiii. 4). Israel and Judah learned the sins of the east, and the east was used as "the rod of God's anger" (Isa. x.) to punish and correct. "Therefore Thou hast forsaken Thy people, the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east (מִלְאֵן מִלְדָּם) and are soothsayers" (Isa. ii. 6).

*The near East: this side of the River.*—Early in the Old Testament *the east*<sup>1</sup> (קֶרֶם) appears as a symbol of hostility to Israel in the people called “the children of the east” (בְּנֵי קֶרֶם), who are to-day the modern Arabians, descendants of Ishmael, and of the sons of Keturah, whom Abraham sent “away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, into the east country” (אֶל-אֶרֶץ קֶרֶם) (Gen. xxv. 6). The undying hostility of the “children of the east” is most marked, and time and again they joined themselves to other haters of Israel, for example, to Midian and Amalek (Judg. vi. 3, 33), where on one occasion they were overthrown when encamped in the Valley of Jezreel (vii. 12, 22).

*The farther East.*—But our symbol in Revelation xvi. does not point to the *near east* (קֶרֶם), but to what we may call the *farther east*, the east beyond the river, to the מִזְרָח “the rising of the sun,” to Mesopotamia, Assyria, Babylonia, Elam, Persia, Madai,

<sup>1</sup> Though קֶרֶם, east, is *usually* used of the west of the river, it is not always so. “The children of the east” lived west of the Euphrates, not on the east.

“rods of anger,” themselves to be scourged in turn (Isa. x. 24, 26).

The following passages throw light on the symbol “kings of the east” (Isa. xli. 2; xlv. 11; xlv. 28): “Who raised up the righteous man (righteousness) *from the east* (מִמֶּזְרָח), called him to His foot, gave the nations before him, called him and made him ruler over kings?” “Calling a ravenous bird *from the east*, the man that executeth My counsel from a far country, that saith of Cyrus, He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the Temple, Thy foundation shall be laid”—all of which came to pass.

Nothing can be plainer than these statements, embracing the *two* thoughts, viz. that not only could God use the king from the east as a *sword* against His people's enemies, but that He could also use the same as the *saviour* and helper of His people, in forwarding their interests. This is amply demonstrated in the Book of Ezra, where Cyrus is described as forwarding the return of the Jews to their own land and providing

every help to build their Temple, whilst he was also used as a scourge and sword against their former enemies. We would ask for very serious thought and consideration of the above, and especially in relation to the present juncture of affairs, i.e. to the nations at war, and the coming overthrow, as we believe, of Turkey. For may we not await this same Divine procedure in the return of the Jews to their land by the hand of the nation or nations who shall take control of Turkey's conquered possessions?—a clear sign of the nearness of the end of this age.

*The New Testament.*—The New Testament, too, uses the same symbols of “east” in a *hostile* sense, in that notable passage Matt. xxiv. 27: “For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the Coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.” With reference to this it has been observed that “the Roman army entered into Judea on the *east* side of it, and carried on their conquest westwards, as if not only the extensiveness of the ruin, but the *very route* which the

army would take, was intended in the comparison of the lightning coming out of the east and shining even unto the west.<sup>1</sup>

*A miniature Armageddon.*—The passage Gen. xiv. 1-24 presents an early predictive picture, in brief outline, of what is to be expected in the latter days, describing "the east in force" against Abram. A miniature Armageddon in Genesis! The description tells us that Amraphel King of Shinar, Arioch King of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer King of Elam, and Tidal King of Nations, made war on "the Land." Later they captured Lot, who was finally delivered by Abram, who in turn was graciously blessed of Melchisedek.

It is not necessary here to more than touch on the past history of Assyria and Babylon and their connection with Israel and Judah. Enough to say that Israel was taken captive to Assyria, Judah captive to Babylon.

*General Conclusion.*—The preparation of "the way of the Kings of the East" would seem to point to one of the *last stages* in history before the war of Armageddon, when,

<sup>1</sup> Newton, p. 411.

as described in Ps. ii., "The kings of the earth will set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Christ." For the drying up of the Euphrates is, as we have seen, the preparation for the last great gathering of the kings of the whole world to the war of that great Day of God Almighty. This coming war—and we cannot overestimate the importance of the fact—will not be an ordinary, but *extraordinary* war, being said to be not so much against Jerusalem and the Jews, as against Jehovah and the Lord Jesus (Ps. ii.).<sup>1</sup> It is a war inspired by three unclean spirits, spirits of devils, proceeding out of the *mouth* of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. "Out of the mouth" pointing to devilish hate within—the hate of evil spirits, to be embodied in a sinister combined hostility of world-power—"world-culture," "intellectualism," and "apostate Christianity," so *trebly bitter*—"earthly, sensual (unspiritual), devilish" (Jas. iii. 15). The kings of the earth are to be lured to their absolute destruction—a destruction by the Presence of the Lord

<sup>1</sup> See Rabbinical section.

against whom they vainly conspire! "For the Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the *day* of His wrath" (Ps. cx.). How rapidly this spirit of "frightfulness" and devilish hate is spreading abroad in this present war is only too appallingly manifest, and is a bitter and shocking foretaste of what is to take place in the near future, when the real Armageddon bursts upon the world in all its God-hating fury. But before it bursts, the Jews must return to their own land.

## NOTE A

### THE EAST

(a) The Jews of old were permeated with the idea of trouble from *the east*, and to such an extent that we read of a tradition with reference to the fall of Jerusalem which states, "that the eastern gate of the Temple (ἡ ἀνατολική πύλη), which was of solid brass and very heavy, and was scarcely shut in an evening by twenty men, and was fastened by strong bars and bolts, was seen, at the sixth hour of the night, opened of its own accord, and could hardly be shut again" (Joseph. *De Bell. Jud.* lib. vi.).

(b) Or, again, in the Targum of Pseud. Jonath. on Num. xx. the same thought is expressed: "The first of the nations who waged war with the house of Israel was the house of Amalek, and their end in the days of the King Messiah is to set in array the ranks of war with all *the sons of the east* against the house of Israel, but the end of the one and the end of the other is that they shall perish for ever."

## NOTE B

### ASSYRIA AND BABYLONIA

It is interesting to remember the intimate connection of Babylonia and Assyria in our consideration of the *Kings of the East*, both eastern Powers; and also the predominant position of *Assyria* as the northern Power in Bible history. How close was their relation is seen from the following details. Asshur, the progenitor of the Assyrian people, was the son of Shem (Gen. x. 22). Both Assyria and Babylon had the same gods and religion, with slight modification; their writing and language were the same. Even down to the Christian era the district of the Euphrates and Tigris (including Babylon) was called by the Greeks and the Romans "Assyria."

Even to-day the science which has to do with Assyrian and Babylonian antiquities, and has thrown new light on Holy Scripture in many important passages, is called "Assyriology." The two countries lay practically side by side; both were enemies of Israel and Judah, and often enemies to each other, although it is generally considered that Assyria was the daughter state of Babylon. The "army" with each was paramount, *the king* was the general, also *chief judge*, and the people had direct approach to him. Both countries lay *east* of the Euphrates, both were "*eastern Powers*." Assyria, "the sword," was the mighty "northern" Power too. It would seem to follow that the *nation* or *nations*, who by providential arrangement hold their place from time to time, are designated in prophecy "Kings of the East" or "Kings of the North," as may be. (See Sayce, "Primer of Assyriology.")

## CHAPTER V

### “GOG . . .” AND “MANY PEOPLES”

#### The Great Enemy at Armageddon

GOG<sup>1</sup> is not mentioned in any prophecy before Ezekiel's time, but in dealing with the two chapters Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. there appears to be no reason to regard them “as merely *figurative* language, predicting the advance of *evil* under the figure of the invasion of an army,” but every reason to see in them what will *actually take place* in the final war immediately before the Millennium kingdom is set up.

The question whether these two chapters describe history or not is answered by chapter xxxviii. 17: “Thus saith the Lord God, Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel,

<sup>1</sup> See Note on Gog.

which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee (Gog) against them?"

Neither, from the nature of these chapters, do we need to search past history for some northern nation or nations—an unlikely assumption—though it may be granted that the great Scythian invasion of Asia (Herod. 1. 104, 105), about 630 B.C., in which Palestine also suffered, may, to some extent, be regarded as a true, if faint picture of what will befall Palestine in the latter days.

To Ezekiel it was given to see the *enemy* and the *day*, and to describe the same in burning language. "Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God: In that day when *My people* of Israel dwelleth safely (לְבֶטֶחַ), shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts (the sides of the north), thou and *many people* (*peoples*) with thee (רַבִּים עַמִּים), all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army: and thou shalt come up against My people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be *in the latter days*, and I will bring thee against *My land*, that the heathen (nations)

may know Me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes."

Gog is thus described as the representative *northern* Power, whilst with him are other northern bands (as "wings" of his army), Gomer and Togarmah<sup>1</sup> (verse 6): *the east* is represented by Persia, the *south* by Ethiopia and Lybia (verse 5). It is to be a mighty host, for (verse 6) "many peoples are with thee." The mention of Magog (verse 2)—"Gog of the land of Magog"—points to a still wider aspect of the list of foes.

For Gen. x. 2 tells us that "the sons of Japheth (were) Gomer and Magog, etc., and the sons of Gomer (were) Ashkenaz,<sup>2</sup> and Riphath, and Togarmah" (verse 3). "By these were the *isles of the Gentiles* divided into *their lands*; every one after his tongue, and after their families, in their *nations*" (verse 5).

The war is thus of *world-wide* area, while Gog represents the anti-Christian and anti-Semitic World-Power in its greed to plunder Israel. To Ezekiel was further revealed the true spiritual aspect of the war, the truth of this war as pictured in Ps. ii.: "Why do

<sup>1</sup> See Notes on the same.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

the heathen rage, and the peoples imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed." So to Ezekiel the message came: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, *I* am against thee, O Gog" (xxxviii. 1). "After many days thou shalt be visited; in the latter years (at the end of the years) thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people (peoples), against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste; but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely (לְבִטָּחָה) all of them. Thou shalt descend and come like a storm; thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands (wings), and many people (peoples) with thee. Thus saith the Lord God, It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall *things come into thy mind and thou shalt think an evil thought* (conceive a mischievous purpose), and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely (הַשְׁקֵטִים שְׁבֵי לְבִטָּחָה), all of them dwelling without

walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a spoil, and to take a prey ; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that *are gathered out of the nations*, which have gotten cattle and foods, that dwell in the midst of the land." "And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that My fury shall come up into My face. For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel," etc., "and I will call for a sword against him (Gog) throughout all My mountains, saith the Lord God ; *every man's sword shall be against his brother.*"

### Gog's End—"A Grave in Israel"

(מִקְבַּר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל)

Chapter xxxix. continues the same awful theme of punishment—punishment on the land of *Magog* and *on the isles* (verse 6), who like Israel were dwelling confidently at home (לְבֵטָחָה). Though the Gentile hosts had settled like a cloud on the mountains of

Israel, yet they should find their graves in the valley, "the valley of the passengers" or "crossers over," the valley of Megiddo maybe, the plain of Esdraelon, this renowned valley, now to be re-named "the valley of Hamon-gog"—"the valley of Gog's multitude"! And the name of Megiddo shall be changed—for so we read it—and be called "Hamonah," "the multitude, a sacrifice for Israel, a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel" (verse 17). So shall the Gentiles learn of Israel's sin and Israel's salvation and Israel's return to their own land. For thus saith the Lord God, "I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there among the heathen; neither will I hide My face any more from them; for I have poured out My spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." At this time Zech. xiv. 4 and Matt. xxiii. 39 will be fulfilled. Space allows merely certain passages out of these two most wonderful chapters, but they ought to be read in entirety by every student of prophecy. But enough has been given to show their trend.

## Gog and Magog in the Apocalypse

The prophecies of Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. too are in close connection with Rev. xvi. 14-16 and xx. 7-10, where, *after the Millennium*, Gog and Magog are said to come against the "beloved city," and come to an awful end. From Rev. xx. 7, 8 we learn that Gog and Magog represent not only the northern Power, but also nations *in general*. For when the thousand years are expired, "Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations, which are in the *four quarters of the earth*, Gog and Magog, together them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." Their doom is different, too, and is more awful than that described by Ezekiel—they are devoured by fire from heaven—by *direct* Divine punishment; while "the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (verses 9, 10).

Thus the Psalms (cf. ii. and cx.), Ezekiel (cf. xxxviii. and xxxix.), Joel (cf. iii.), and

the Apocalypse (cf. xvi. and xx.) picture the same awful Satanic hostility of the nations against "the people," "the land," and "the city," but more especially in reality against God, Jehovah, and His Christ—a hatred that increases, and will go on increasing, till the fearful climax of eternal doom.

The other side of the picture presents us with "all Israel saved"; its down-trodden land and city being uplifted and made the centre of blessing for the whole earth. "And the Lord shall be king of the whole earth" (Zech. xiv.).

### When will Armageddon take place?

In the foregoing chapters there is one fact or sign stated quite clearly, which will serve as a guide to the probable *nearness* of Armageddon. When it shall come to pass, *Israel shall once more be dwelling "securely" in the land.* The answer to the question is contained in the little word לְבָטָח, translated "confidently," "securely." It occurs five times in Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix.; four times with reference to Israel; once to the Gentile nations. Referring to Israel it occurs

in chapters xxxviii. 8, 11, 14, and xxxix. 26; whilst it is used of the Gentiles in chapter xxxix. 6. The phrase means *safely, securely; in confidence that all is well*. It is also used in Scripture when the confidence is merely *a fancied one*. For instance, when Gideon smote the host of Midian, they were in fancied security (בְּטָחָה) (Judg. viii. 11); or again when Dan smote the people mentioned in Judg. xviii. 27, they are described as שָׁקֵט וּבְטָחָה, i.e. quiet and trusting.

The argument of Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. is on the same lines. Israel, back again in her own land, possibly never dreaming of any further ill, now that the long centuries of captivity amongst the Gentiles are over, is described as "dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates." This tempts Gog, who "thinks an evil thought," which is known to the Lord, who addresses him through the prophet. "Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God, In that day when My people of Israel dwelleth safely," i.e. in fancied security and peace, "shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come," etc. (xxxviii. 14, 15).

St. Paul alludes to this "fancied security" in writing to the Thessalonians: "For ye yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, *Peace and safety*, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. v. 2, 3).

To sum up the foregoing, we learn, with reference to Israel, that at Armageddon (*a*) she will be back again in her own land; (*b*) she will be in fancied peace and safety when the enemy makes his attack; while (*c*) this fancied security and false confidence that all is well is seen to be not possessed by Israel alone, but also by the Gentile nations themselves, whose punishment is swift and sure. For "I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell *carelessly* (in false confidence) in the isles; and they shall know that I am the Lord." Though God allows the sword of the avenger to fall on Israel, yet He avenges Himself on the enemy and avenger. (*d*) Israel is as yet unconverted at this crisis; but this we shall endeavour to prove in our next chapter.

## NOTE A

### GOG, GOMER, TOGARMAH, AND ASHKENAZ

The following is an "Omnium Gatherum" of views, though in fact very little is known as to the above.

Gog is first mentioned in Ezek. xxxviii. 2, 3, and throughout chapters xxxviii. and xxxix.

The name is held to be one of title, descriptive of dignity, as Pharaoh, Cæsar, Czar, Kaiser, etc., and is held to correspond to the Turkish Chak, the Tartarian Kak, and the Mongolian Gog (Kalisch).

"Gog of the land of Magog" (verse 2)—Magog is referred to Armenia, or part of it.

Gog is regarded as the representative of *the northern nations*; and some have seen in him the Scythians (so Josephus).

It is thought that Gog and Magog "are the general name of the northern nations of Europe and Asia, or the districts north of Caucasus, on Mount Taurus, colonized by Gog or Magog, another of the sons of Japheth" (Gen. x. 2).

Gog and Magog occur constantly in Rabbinical books and in "Antichrist Apocalypses."

Mat = "land" in Assyrian. So Magog = "Matgog," i.e. the land of Gog (Sayce).

Gog has been used as a synonym for "barbarian."

Davidson's comment on Ezekiel xxxviii. 2 in the Cambridge Bible says, "The meaning of the word Gog is obscure." Schrader (KAT. on the passage) refers to the name of the Lydian king Gyges, given as Gu-gu in the Assyr. inscriptions, on the one hand, and on the other to Gagi, name of the ruler of a country in the east, the situation of which is uncertain. This land apparently lay north of Assyria. (Fred. Del. Par., pp. 246-7.)

GOMER—the name of the son of Japheth (Gen. x. 3), mentioned in Ezek. xxxviii. 6 along with Togarmah "of the *north quarters*," assisting Gog. Thought to belong to the region of the Caspian and Euxine. Later Cappadocia, called in Armenian "Gamir." Held to be the Cimmerians, whose home was north of the Euxine, from which they were expelled by the Scythians.

In Lange's Commentary on Gen. x. 3 we get the following remarks on Gomer:—

"*Gomer*.—G, M, R: These radical letters are found extensively combined in the history and geography of Europe; as though some early roving people had left the mark of their name from the Pontus, on Black Sea, to Ireland: G, M, R; K, M, R; KyMMeRii (Cymmerians) by metathesis, K, M, R, CRiMea, G, R, M, GeRMani, CyMRI, Cymri, Cimbri, Cumbri, Cumberland, Hum-berland, Northumberland, Cambria, etc. They may not be all etymologically connected,

but there is every probability that they were left by the same old people, ever driven on westward by successive waves of migration."

TOGARMAH.—Mentioned in Gen. x. 3 as the son of Gomer, the son of Japheth. Also mention of him is found in 1 Chron. i. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 14 and xxxviii. 6, which last reads: "Gomer and all his bands (wings or forces); the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands; and many people (peoples) with thee."

Togarmah is held to refer to North Armenia, though generally used by Jewish writers of the Turks. Armenians are still said to be called "the house of Torgom." Some see Togarmah in "Turk" and "Tartar." Togarmah is combined with Gog in the last war of Armageddon.

ASHKENAZ.—Son of Gomer, son of Japheth (Gen. x. 3; 1 Chron. i. 6). Probably inhabited the districts near to the shores of the Caspian and Euxine or Black Sea; or the name refers to a region in the neighbourhood of Armenia, whence it is said, "following the course of Japhethite migrations," the race seems to have wandered to Germany. Another description is: "a horde from the north, of Indo-Germanic origin, which settled on the south of Lake Urumiyeh."

Mentioned in Jer. li. 27 with Ararat and Minni; Ararat is recognized as modern Armenia, north of Lake Van; Ashkenaz,

south-east of the lake. Rabbi Saadiah calls the Ashkenazi "Slavi." The Targum of Jonathan says Ashkenaz = Adiabene. Others call Ashkenaz Scandinavia; others, "Saxons." Modern Jews say Germany.

Lange's comment is : אֶשְׁכְּנָז, by metathesis אֶשְׁכְּנָז (Ashkenaz, by metathesis Aksenaz, Axenas), may be the old name for the Black Sea, or the country lying upon it. The Greeks called it ἄξεινος, for which they accordingly found a meaning in their own language—the inhospitable—afterwards euphonized to εὐξείνως—the Euxine.

## NOTE B

### RÔSH, MESHECH, TUBAL

RÔSH.—Ezek. xxxviii. 2 : "Son of Man, set thy face against Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rôsh, Mesech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him." There is no doubt that this is the correct translation, which the Sept. bears out, reading "prince of Rôsh." The connection of נָשִׂא, N<sup>e</sup>sî, with ראשׁ, Rôsh, i.e. of prince with Rôsh, states : (1) the leading position of Rôsh ; (2) the combination of these two words hints at the characteristics of Rôsh, viz. his power, wealth, and statecraftiness. For נָשִׂא ראשׁוֹ, Nāsā Rôshô, is a scriptural expression, one of whose meanings is "*to lift up the head*," signifying power and wealth

and also pride. So נָשִׂיא רֹשׁ, N<sup>e</sup>sî Rôsh, prince of Rôsh, means simply "lifted up of head," and suggests that Rôsh and the combined allied nations were strong and wealthy, and feeling this, take crafty counsel against Israel (cf. Ezek. xxxviii. 11, 12).

The use of the word Rôsh (Heb. "head") is also noticeable in its relationship to *the north*. Ezek. xxxviii. 6 reads: "Gomer and all his wings (of his army); the house of Togarmah, *sides* of the north, and all his wings, and many people with thee" (Gog).

Verse 15 says: "And thou shalt come from thy place out of the sides of the north, thou and many peoples with thee (Gog), all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army." The imagery seems to point to a geographical expanse with mention of its extreme head and sides, of which the north is represented by Rôsh (i.e. north of Palestine), while the mention of Magog (Ezek. xxxviii. 2) and Persia, Ethiopia and Lybia (verse 5) represents in turn the west, east, and south. Be this as it may, the great enemy—of whom God says, "I am against thee"—includes without doubt Russia in the latter days. Israel was carried captive to Assyria, the scriptural north, while the Jews are at present exiles in the north in Poland and Russia—north geographically to Palestine. Both are predicted to return. That Rôsh refers to a nation there seems little doubt, and critics generally are agreed

on this. For example, Gesenius describes Rôsh as, "A northern nation, mentioned with Tubal and Meshech; undoubtedly *the Russians*, who are mentioned by Byzantine writers of the tenth century, under the name οἱ Ῥῶς, dwelling in the north of Taurus, and described by Ibn Fossilan, an Arabic writer of the same age, as dwelling on the River Rha (Wolga)" (Lex. p. 752). Of *Meshech*, Gesenius says: "Moschi, a barbarous people inhabiting the Moschian mountains, between Iberia, Armenia, and Colchis, Ps. cxx. 5, almost always joined with the neighbouring Tibareni (תִּבְרֵנִי, תִּבְרֵנִי), Gen. x. 2; Ezek. xxvii. 13, etc. . . . just as in Herodotus (iii. 94; vii. 78) Μόσχοι καὶ Τιβαρηνοί" (p. 516).

On Tubal and Meshech, Ezek. xxvii. 13, "Speaker's Commentary" says: "The Tiberani and Moschi, whose lands were on the Caucasian highlands between the Euxine and Caspian seas. This has been the seat of the finest race of men, and so from thence slaves have been continually sought. . . . In records of Assurbanipal, Tabalu (translated by Mr. G. Smith, *Tubal*) occurs among the conquered countries in an expedition including Tyre, Cilicia, and Lydia."

The learned and erudite Calmet, in his valuable work "Commentaire Littéral sur la Genèse," p. 92, referring to Gog, says: "He is called the prince or most important personage amongst the peoples of Russia,

Moscovie, and of those who dwell upon the River Tobal, upon which the town of Tobolsk in Moscovie is situate." He accepts, too, the view that the Russians are denoted by Rôsh in Ezekiel, as the following quotation shows: "Montan, Génébrard, and Mercier believe that Mosoch is the father of the Muscovites. Mede thinks that the Muscovites were only a colony of Cappadocians; for the old writers do not speak of the Muscovites. But is it strange that the ancients have not called them Muscovites, since they had no trade with them, and only knew them by the name of Scythians or Gêtes? There is certainly more evidence that the Mosques are neighbours of Armenia, and the Cappadocians come from the Muscovites, than there is to the contrary. The River Moscus, the town of Moscau, the name of the Muscovites, the extent of their country, are proofs which cannot be rejected. The Russians denoted apparently by Rôsh in Ezekiel are mingled with the Muscovites, or rather make with them one people. We find in this country a town and a river of the name of Tubâl or Thobal. In the neighbourhood are the Tubellians and the Thracians, which are considered to have descended from Tubal and Theras" (p. 94).

## CHAPTER VI

### ISRAEL'S RETURN TO THE LAND BEFORE ARMAGEDDON

IT would hardly seem necessary to argue the question of the "Return" of the Jews to Palestine from their world-wide captivity, as no statement in Scripture apparently is more clearly set forth than this. But there are so many Christians to-day who deny the return of the Jews, that it seems impossible and undesirable to pass it by without comment, and more especially as the central thought and crisis of Armageddon is so intimately bound up with the Jewish people, and the Return of the Lord to save them in their terrible distress ; to prove to them visibly that "this same Jesus" whom their fathers crucified is Lord of all ; and to prove to the rebellious nations of the world the almighty power of the One

who said "All power is given unto Me." It is too readily forgotten that "the Return to the Land" has been the peculiar hope of the people all down the ages, and of this the Rabbinical books give ample proof. This belief is, for example, aptly and briefly expressed in the Targum of the Song of Songs vii. 13: "And when it shall be the good pleasure of the Lord to redeem His people from captivity, it shall be said to King Messiah, Now the end of the captivity is come. . . . Arise, now, receive the kingdom which I have laid up for Thee." Or, again, in the Midrash Rabbah, Song of Songs: "How does R. Eleazer understand the verse, 'Arise, O north wind, and come, O south'? when those who have been driven away to the north will awake and come and rest in the south. As is said, Jer. xxxi.: 'Behold, I will bring them from the land of the north and will gather them from the sides of the earth.' When Gog and Magog who dwell in the north will wake up and come (and hold battle in the south), and will fall in the south, as is said in Ezek. xxxix. God said of Gog and Magog: 'And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth

part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts.' The King Messiah, who is in the north, will wake Himself and will come and build the Temple (בית המקדש) which is in the south, as is said (Is. xli.): 'I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come.'"

It seems also altogether impossible to regard the scriptural passages dealing with *Israel's and Judah's return* from exile as merely *figurative* speech, and to be interpreted after a spiritual manner, and applied entirely to the Church of Christ and His spiritual kingdom, as so many do. For instance, it does violence to the promise made to Abram (Gen. xv. 18): "To thee and to thy seed have I given this land," given to him on the basis of sacrifice (verse 17), for an everlasting possession. There are further chapters or passages clearly showing (*a*) that as they were literally scattered *from*, so they shall be literally gathered *to* their own land; (*b*) the *condition* on which they shall return; (*c*) *when* they shall return; (*d*) to *what* they shall return—quietness to be followed by trouble; (*e*) the change that shall thereupon take place in them—repentance and heart change, and a filling of the spirit; (*f*) that

their fulness will be like a General Resurrection, a double blessing, to themselves and all the world over; (*g*) and that their return and subsequent salvation will be a public vindication of the righteousness and lovingkindness and forgiveness of God. Let us briefly consider the above *seriatim*:—

(a) *Israel literally gathered to the Land.*—

For example, we mention two passages in Ezekiel nearly related to the present subject, to prove the above statement: Ezek. xxxviii. 8, 12, part of God's warning to Gog: "In the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is *gathered out* of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is *brought forth out of the nations*, and they shall dwell safely all of them . . . to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people *that are gathered out* of the nations," etc.; also Ezek. xxxix. 25–29, which should be read in whole; an unanswerable passage.

(b) *Their Spiritual Condition on Return.*—

They are to return *unconverted*, that is,

without faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Ezek. xxxvii. 12, 13), though there are passages which speak of a confession of sin, a humbling of heart and a recognition of punishment, which will draw from God a response, and lead to that providential arrangement of events which culminates in Zech. xii. 10: "They shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn," showing that up to this advent they are unconverted.

Two of the most valuable passages for our present study are Lev. xxvi. 40-42 and Ezek. vi. 8, 9. They picture what may be called *The Condition of Return*. "If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass that they have trespassed against Me, and that I also have walked contrary to them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity, then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham will I remember, and I will remember *the Land*." *A thrice remembered covenant* and the Land (Lev. xxvi. 40-42).

Or, again, "Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword amongst the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries; and they that escape of you shall *remember Me* among the nations whither they shall be carried captives . . . and they shall *loathe* themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations; they shall know that I am the Lord, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them" (Ezek. vi. 8, 9, 10).

Mention might be made of Hos. v. 14, 15; vi. i., and 2 Chron. vi., in which latter is contained Solomon's special prayer with reference to *the Land*; also of Exod. vi. 5; but the above will suffice for our purpose.

Baruch (iv. 36, 37) describes Judah's happy return from captivity: "Look about thee, O Jerusalem, towards the east, and behold the joy that cometh to thee from God. For behold, thy children come whom thou sentest away *scattered*, they come *gathered together from the east even to the west*, at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing for the honour of God." The fifth chapter takes up the

same theme (verses 1-5), "Put off, O Jerusalem, the garment of thy mourning and affliction, and put on the beauty and honour of that everlasting glory which thou hast from God. God will clothe thee with the double garment of justice, and will set a crown on thy head of everlasting honour. For God will show His brightness in thee; to every one under heaven. For thy name shall be named to thee by God for ever; the place of justice and honour and piety. Arise, O Jerusalem, and stand on high: and look about thee towards the east, and behold thy children *gathered together from the rising to the setting sun*, by the word of the Holy One rejoicing in the remembrance of thee."

These two passages from Baruch certainly advocate a *literal* return of the Jews, according to their view, to their land.

(c) *The Time of their Return*.—Consider our Saviour's statement in Luke xxi. 24: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, *until* the times of the

Gentiles be fulfilled." What possible conclusion can be gathered from these words other than that the Jews, led away, *are to return*, and at a special time, viz. when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled?

St. Paul (Rom. xi. 25, 26) takes up this prediction and says: "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," and this corresponds with Dan. xii. 7: "When He shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people." Such will be God's perfect work in judgment and grace, both on the Jews and the nations of the world, the final vindication being at Zion: "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer" (Rom. xi. 26).

(*d*) *Quietly in the Land.* — Ezek. xxxvii. describes how, after they (the Jews) return to their land, they will be *one* nation with Israel: "And I will make them *one nation in the land* upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all." "David My servant shall be king over them" (verses 21, 22, 24).

Ezek. xxxviii. tells us further how they will be living *quietly in the land* at the time of Gog's ambition to come against them; whilst chapter xxxix. describes their deliverance out of their direst distress, and the overthrow of their enemies.

(e) *Their subsequent Repentance.*—This dealing of God with the nations and their own subsequent salvation results in their true heartfelt repentance and turning to God. "*Then shall they know* that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the nations: but *I have gathered them unto their own land*, and have left none of them any more there." Thus are they in the position to receive the Spirit: "Neither will I hide My face any more from them; for I have poured out My Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (verses 28, 29).

(f) *Their universal Blessing.*—This explains that remarkable saying of St. Paul (Rom. xi. 15): "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"

(g) *Divine Vindication.* — Lastly, Ezek. xxxix. states that their *Return* is necessary to the vindication of God's righteousness and righteous dealing, and also of His infinite love and kindness and forgiveness. When Israel sees the judgment that falls so heavily on the nations, "So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward: and the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against Me, therefore hid I My face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies; so fell they all by the sword" (verses 22, 23).

### The Time of the End

There is a notable utterance in Dan. xii., the last chapter of Daniel's prophecies, which throws undeniable light on our subject.

The chapter commences with the appearance of the great Archangel Michael, and the mention of "Jacob's trouble" (verse 1); of the Resurrection (verse 2); of the future glory of believers (verse 3); of the increase of knowledge (verse 4); which results in a question

being asked, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" (verse 6). Verse 7 commences the reply, which runs: "And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left unto heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and *when He shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.*" The word שָׁטַף translated to "scatter" means to "break and scatter." Its setting is remarkable in the Scriptures. It is used of punishment in its severest form.

Jer. xiii. 11, 14—Israel and Judah: "they would not hear." "And I will dash them one against another; even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord; and I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them."

Jer. li. 20-23: *Nine times* in succession is the same word used of the punishment of *Babylon*. "I will break in pieces the nations—horse and his rider—chariot and his rider—man and woman—old and young—young man and maid—shepherd and his flock—husband-

man and his yoke of oxen—captains and rulers.

Ps. ii. 9: It is used in this Messianic Psalm of the punishment of *the nations*, "Thou shalt break them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Ps. cxxxvii. 9: It is also used of the doom of Babylon: "Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones."

So the statement כְּבִלּוֹת נִפְּץ יָד עַם קִדְּשׁ, "when He shall have ended breaking the power (lit. hand, cf. Job. xxvii. 11) of the holy people," refers unmistakably to the Jewish people, who have returned to the land, and to a time when God's purpose in regard to them has been fulfilled—their drinking to the dregs the cup of punishment.

The mention in Scripture of what is described as "Jacob's Trouble," to take place *in the land*, and as yet unfulfilled, points to the Jewish Return, and of this subject we will now treat.

## CHAPTER VII

### JACOB'S TROUBLE AT ARMAGEDDON

"FOR thus saith the Lord, We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear and not of peace. Ask ye now and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?"

Alas! for *that day* is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, "but he shall be saved out of it" (Jer. xxx. 5-7). Verse 4 tells us that Israel and Judah have returned; verse 9, that a *final* salvation is granted them.

This passage speaks of *a time*, or period of time, to be unique in Jacob's experience and history, i.e. Israel's and Judah's. For "day" and "time" according to Hebrew usage are

very often synonymous terms. A time unique in suffering and distress is predicted. "That day is great," "not even any is like it," "*none is like it*," i.e. it is greater in trouble and distress than any before or after it (מָצֵין כְּמֵהוּ).

"A time of distress<sup>1</sup> to *Jacob*" (עֵת-צָרָה הִיא לְיַעֲקֹב). The mention of *Jacob* would seem to refer to that loving, gentle, personal dealing of God with Jacob, Jacob the lonely wanderer; for later on God was called "the God of Jacob," cf. Ps. xlv. 7, 11, implying that the same helping hand would come to the aid of Jacob's descendants in their dire distress.

The word translated in the A.V. "trouble" comes from a root signifying *to lay hold of, shut up, press*, and so oppress, cause distress, vividly illustrated by the present condition of the Jews in the Pale of Settlement in Poland and Russia. The policy has been to press the Jews into cities, forbidding them to live on the land, and there naturally follows "congestion" and "distress," the very word used here. When Jacob was pursued by Esau it was said of him, "and (Jacob) was distressed" (נִצָּר), a word of almost similar meaning. Thus the

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

crisis of Jacob's distress would appear to take place when "pressed into" Jerusalem and surrounded on every hand by hostile foes (Zech. xii. and xiv.) at Armageddon.

Daniel mentions this time of trouble, and describes its *intensity* in simple, unmistakable language. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, *such as never was since there was a nation*, even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Dan. xii. 1). This leads to the consideration of the "Day of the Lord."

#### NOTE

The phrase עַת צָרָה, time of trouble or distress, is common to Jeremiah (cf. chapters xiv. 8 and xv. 11), who also uses the term יוֹם צָרָה, day of affliction (cf. xvi. 19), as synonymous.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DAY OF THE LORD AND ARMAGEDDON

THE early Christians feared the dreadfulness of this Day, as some, yea many, do now, but St. Paul exhorted such not to be troubled, giving the weighty reason that : “ The Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be our gathering together unto Him ” (2 Thess. i. 2). The Day will come suddenly, and as it were with the night, for it is a night of darkness to the wicked (1 Thess. v. 2, 3), *but* it is a literal Day to believers, a Day of the Lord to them (for their night is far spent, their *day* is at hand). “ But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that *that day* should overtake you as a thief. Ye are children of the *Day*: we are not of the Night, or of darkness ” (1 Thess. v. 4, 5).

1. *For Christ's people*—the believers—the Day of the Lord is stated to be a *Day of Resurrection, Rejoicing, and Glory*. *A Day of Resurrection*: "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise *first*," etc. (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17); *a Day of Rejoicing*: for "we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are our's in the Day of the Lord Jesus" (2 Cor. i. 14); *a Day of Glory*: "when He shall come to be glorified in His saints" (2 Thess. i. 10).

2. *For unbelievers in Israel*, the Day of the Lord represents a "time" or "day" of the Lord's vengeance. "Alas for the Day! for the Day of the Lord is at hand (יוֹם־יְהוָה), and as a destruction from the Almighty (מִשְׁפָּרַי) shall it come" (Joel i. 15). "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the Day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness" (Joel ii. 1, 2).

3. *For the wicked nations* it is a time of the reaping of the angel of death in the valley of

decision. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the Day of the Lord (יִום יָהוָה) is near in the valley of decision" (Joel iii. 14). The Day of Vengeance (Isa. lxi. 2), "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with the angels of His power, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of *our* Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 7, 8).

4. *For the repentant in Israel*, as yet unconverted, it is "a Day of darkness and of gloominess," as they see the mighty hosts gathering about them; *but* a Day of wondrous mercy and salvation as they "look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn because of Him" (Zech. xii. 10). A Day of Light, for their Light is come and "the glory of the Lord is risen upon them. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon *thee*, and His glory shall be seen upon *thee*" (Isa. lx. 1, 2).

*The Key to the Difference in the Language used.*—A careful consideration of the above passages gives the key to the difference and apparent difficulty in the language used. The

Day of the Lord to the believer is the "Day of Christ" (Phil. i. 10), when he is His at His Coming (*παρουσία*) (1 Cor. xv. 23); the Day of Jesus Christ (Phil. i. 6); the Day of *our* Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. i. 8); the long-looked for Day of those who know Jesus as their personal *Saviour*, as their *Messiah*, and as their *Lord*.

The impenitent wicked have no such experience, and to them the Day of the Lord can only be feared as one of coming wrath and punishment from the Lord of Hosts, the Almighty—for *they know Him not*, as the believer does, as Lord and Saviour. Hence the distinction in language when speaking of the Day.

The Day *dawns* for the Church before it *darkens* in punishment over the wicked, according to the precious promise of the Saviour, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John xiv. 3).

So the Day of the Lord opens with the Coming *for* His saints, to appear *with* them, "for the Lord my God shall come, and all His saints with thee" (Zech. xiv. 5), "to execute judgment upon all" ungodly (Jude 15),

whereupon the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem and before His ancients gloriously (Isa. xxiv. 23), in His Millennium Kingdom ; while for unbelievers generally, Armageddon ushers in the Day of the Lord. For, as has been said, "The Lord of Hosts prepares Himself for the final battle, and comes personally to inaugurate, by the judgment of the living—the destruction of the anti-Christian hosts—that great day of judgment and Day of the Lord, which lasts a thousand years."

The Day of the Lord thus fully viewed commences with the Parousia of Christ for His saints and His subsequent coming or return or manifestation (epiphany) with them in judgment to set up His glorious Millennium Kingdom on earth. For the Scriptures clearly describe the Day of the Lord in this twofold aspect of judgment and blessing, the latter embracing the reign of Christ and His saints for a thousand years.

## CHAPTER IX

### WHAT THE ANCIENT RABBIS SAY ABOUT ARMAGEDDON

#### The Messiah and Gog and Magog

ALL down the centuries the Hope of Israel has been the coming of the Messiah—the King Messiah. Old Jewish books, “Targum,” “Talmud,” and “Midrash,” abound in references to such a Deliverer, “strong and mighty” and able to save them from their enemies. Always surrounded by, or living in the midst of, foes, Gog and Magog loomed before them in the distance as the greatest of all enemies, no doubt symbolic to them, during a long period of their history, of a power mightier than the mighty and as yet invincible Rome, designated in their books as “Edom.” The greatest enemy was yet to come, but best of all he was to be the *last* of all, for then Messiah

would come and restore their heritage, and rule and reign.

*The Jewish Position.*—The Jewish position is well summed up in the following words : “Thou shalt perform freedom (liberty) to Thy people of the house of Israel by (or through) the Messiah, even as Thou didst by the hand of Moses and Aaron in the day of Passover” (Targ. Onk., Lam. ii. 22). But this liberty was to be no local one, but only part of a world-wide plan ; for the conquest of Gog and Magog would have effect on *all the world*. “I shall see Him (was the desire of their heart), but not now ; I shall behold Him, but He is not near ; when a king shall arise from Jacob, and Messiah be exalted from Israel . . . and *He shall rule over all the children of men*” (Ibid. Num. xxiv. 17).

*The Vital Nature of the War.*—The Rabbis were not blind to the *vital nature* of the war with Gog and Magog, and its magnitude ; for they clearly recognize that it was in very truth *the crisis of their people* and of the world at large. But feeling their helplessness—their utter incapacity to do anything—it is somewhat pathetic to see how, to make out a case for their people, they put words into the mouth

of their coming Messiah to help, from their point of view, their hopeless case ; words that gently check their expressed wish "to take part in the battle of freedom," saying : " And at that time when King Messiah shall be revealed to the congregation of Israel . . . King Messiah shall say, ' I adjure thee, O My people of the house of Israel, wherefore do ye contend against the people of the land, (desiring) to go out of captivity ? And wherefore do ye rise up against the army of Gog and Magog ? Tarry ye a little while, till the people be consumed who have gone up to wage war against Jerusalem, and afterwards the Lord of the world will remember unto you the mercies of the righteous, and it shall be pleasure before Him to redeem you ' " (Targ. Jon. ben Uz., Song viii. 1-4).

*The Real Issue.*—They further recognize, and this is all important, that the last great war is to be one between *God* and Gog and Magog, and not between Gog and Israel. For they only speak of God and the powers at His command as being able to vanquish this great enemy, and nothing of themselves.

"And Gog and Magog, when Messiah

comes, will say, 'The former (those before me) were foolish who took counsel with their kings against *Israel*. They did not know that they (Israel) had a Lord in heaven (פטרון). I will not do so. But I will first join battle with their Lord and *afterwards* join battle with them. For it is written (Ps. ii.): "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers took counsel together, *against the Lord and against His Anointed.*" God said to him, "Wicked one, thou comest to join battle with Me. How many troops (angels) are before Me? How many lightnings? How many thunders? As it is written, 'And the Lord thundered with a mighty voice.' And how many lightnings and how many angels? But My strength (גבורה) will go forth and hold battle with thee. As it is written (Zech. xiv.): 'Then shall the Lord go forth to fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle.' As it is written (Isa. xlii.): 'The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war,' etc. As it is written (Zech. xiv.): 'And the Lord shall be king over all the earth,'" (Mid. Rab. Levit., Sect. 27).

*The Victory is Sure.*—That *right* would triumph over *might* was to the old Rabbis an absolute certainty, and this truth is expressed in many passages, while Israel, so shamed (by the world), is to be brought back to a glorious Millennium Kingdom. "The Lord will destroy His enemies who rise to put His people to shame; He will thunder upon them with a loud voice from the heavens, the Lord shall exact vengeance from Magog and from the army of the thundering nations, who come with him from the ends of the earth, and He will give strength to His king and magnify the kingdom of His Messiah" (Targ. Jon. ben Uz, 1 Sam. ii. 10).

*Messiah ben Joseph or ben Ephraem.*<sup>1</sup>—Later Rabbis have depicted the war between Gog and Magog as being waged and brought to a successful issue by Messiah ben Joseph or Ephraem, the Messiah of the ten tribes, who, however, is stated to die in the great attempt, only to be brought to life again by the King Messiah, Messiah ben David, who restores him, and many dead, to life again

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

with a glorious resurrection, and so ushers in the Millennium Kingdom.

*The Central Fact.*—Thus it is abundantly clear that the Rabbis believed in a final Armageddon, and that the decision of the war was to be brought about by the Messiah ben David—the King Messiah. As is said:—

“And when it shall be the good pleasure of the Lord to redeem His people from captivity, it shall be said to King Messiah, Now the end of the captivity is come. . . . Arise, now, receive the kingdom, which I have laid up for thee” (Targ. Jon. ben Uz, Song vii. 13).

And should it be inquired, *When* will this happy consummation be effected? the reply is, “*At Passover.*”<sup>1</sup>

“At Passover the nations will imagine vainly to strive (with the Messiah): and this will be the plague. At the Pesach to come. . . .

“The Great One and the Ruler hath given the Passover for a sign of protection and deliverance, escape and salvation. At the Pesach to come. . . .

“A Passover is yet to be for the redemption of the captives: And the Lord will go forth

<sup>1</sup> See Etheridge, vol. ii. p. 59.

and fight against the nations. *At the Pesach to come*" (Zech. xiv. 3).

Such was the thought and belief of the people of old.

#### NOTE

From the Christian point of view it seems only fair to state that the invention of Messiah ben Joseph or Ephraem is merely an endeavour to avoid applying certain passages of Scripture, which describe sufferings and death, to Messiah ben David.

For passages which formerly were applied to Messiah ben David without contradiction, being found very inconvenient by the Rabbinical writers after Christ had come and suffered and died (and more especially when they found these passages used with great effect and force by Christians in their argument and proof that Jesus was the Christ), they therefore either entirely omitted them from their books or applied them to the *fictitious Messiah ben Ephraem*, or finally otherwise said that the old Rabbinical statements which referred to the sufferings and death of the Messiah were merely *figurative*, and were not to be taken literally. Any or all of these endeavours were made with the one idea to avoid and evade the plain and literal statements of Scripture.

## CHAPTER X

### THE SEVEN YEARS BEFORE THE MESSIAH COMES

#### The Nature of the Generation at Armageddon when the Messiah comes

LIVING in critical times like the present, and believing, as we do, that we are at the end of the age, the following statements of the Rabbis are worthy of close attention. They occur in the great Jewish Commentary—the Midrash Rabbah, on the Song of Songs, chapter ii.: “‘My beloved spake and said unto me.’ *Spake* unto me by Elijah, *said* unto me by the King Messiah. What did he say? ‘Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away’ (from captivity). R. Azariah said, “‘For, lo, the winter is past” (verse 11), that is, the kingdom of the Cuthim,<sup>1</sup> which reduces

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

the world (to idolatry) and fools it with its lies. As is said, "If thy brother, the son of thy mother . . . entice thee" (to idolatry), Deut. xiii. 6 (thou shalt not follow). "The rain is over and gone" (verse 11), that is, the servitude (of captivity). "The flowers appear on the earth" (verse 12). The strong ones have appeared in the land. Who are they?'

"R. Berakiah in the name of R. Isaac said, 'It is written (Zech. ii.), "And the Lord showed me four carpenters," and they are Elijah, and Messiah the King, and Melchisedek, and the Messiah ben Joseph, who is anointed to go to war (with Gog and Magog) (משוח מלחמה). "The time of the singing is come" (verse 12). The time is come that the kingdom of the Cuthim shall fall. The time is come that the kingdom of heaven shall be revealed (מלכות שמים תגלה). As is said (Zech. xiv.), "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth." "And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land" (verse 12), that is, the voice of our King Messiah, who will proclaim (as a herald) and say: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings" (the redemption of the Jews).

“The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs” (verse 13). R. Hiya bar Abba said, ‘Near to the days of the Messiah a great destruction (plague) will come to the world. And the wicked will perish. “And the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell” (verse 13), i.e. those who are left (the righteous, צדיקים). And concerning them is said (Isa. iv.), “And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy”’ (verse 3). R. Jonathan said: ‘During the last seven years before the Messiah the son of David comes, it will be as follows. The first year will see fulfilled that which is said in Amos iv. : “And I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city,” etc. (verse 7). In the *second* year the evils (arrows) of famine (חַצִּי רָעָב) will be sent. Famine in a lesser degree (cf. Ezek. v. 16). In the *third* year there will be a great famine, and men and women will die in it, and little children. And pious and righteous will become fewer. And the Law will be forgotten by Israel. In the *fourth* year there will be a partial famine (a famine and not a famine—plenty and

not plenty). In the *fifth* year will be great plenty. And men will eat and drink and rejoice. And the Law will return as though *new*, and will make itself new to Israel (ומתחדשת לישראל); in the *sixth* year will be thunders (קולות); in the *seventh* year wars. And as the seventh closes, the son of David comes' (במוצאי שביעית בן דוד בא).

“ ‘Abayi says, “Many seven years have come to pass like these and the Messiah is not yet come.” And He will not come, until has come to pass according to that which Rêsh Lachish said : ‘The generation, when the Messiah, the Son of David comes, will be as follows (דור שבן דוד בא) :

“ ‘(a) The place where the wise meet (חכמים) will be a meeting-place (בית ווער) for harlots.

“ ‘(b) Galil will be waste (where the Rabbis (רבנים) were wont to assemble).

“ ‘(c) Gablan will become desolate (the city of Gebil, or the city Gablan, will be called the land of Seir, i.e. Edom—Rome—will be desolate).

“ ‘(d) The men of Galil will go from one city to another seeking bread, and no one will have mercy on them (הסופרים).’ (That is,

the learning or understanding of the Rabbis will be destroyed.)

“(e) The wisdom of the scribes will be held in dishonour.

“(f) Men who fear to sin and are wont to act in lovingkindness will die (or, there will not be such men as fear to sin or such men as do acts of kindness).

“(g) And truth will be wanting (lacking).

“(h) (The special features, manners) characteristics of the generation will be as of dogs (ופני הדר בפני הכלב)—(shameless before one another).’

“How do we know that truth will fail? For it is said (Isa. l. 15): ‘Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil is accounted mad’ (see margin A.V.).

“Whither will the truth (or true men) go?

“R. Yani (of Tshipori) says it (or they) will go to dwell as flocks in the wilderness (or truth will only be found in the wilderness, where there are no men, only beasts and living creatures).

“But with men there will be no truth.

“And the Rabbis say, when the generation of the Son of David comes, the wise of the

generation will (already) have died. And as for those who are left, their eyes will waste away with sorrow and sighing. And many troubles and many evils will come upon the Jews (the community, congregation). And fresh severe decrees will be sent (against the Jews). The first decree will hardly be fulfilled before another comes in close connexion with it (close upon its heels).

“ R. Nehoray said, in the generation, when the Son of David comes, the young will put the old to shame and the old men will stand in the presence of the young (הזקנים-הנערים).

“(Micah vi. 6) ‘The daughter riseth up against her mother; the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man’s enemies are the men of his own house.’

“ And a son will not show shame before his father (be ashamed, blush).

“ R. Nehemiah said before the days of the Messiah poverty will be great and food will be dear. The vine will give its fruit, but the wine will be sour, and all men will be changed (turned to) heretics, and none will suffer correction.

“ R. Abba bar Chahana said the Son of

David will not come except in the generation whose character is like to that of dogs.

"R. Levi said the son of David will not come except in a generation whose characteristic is brazen impudence (עוֹזֹת פָּנִים) and who are guilty of destruction (so sinful that God will wish to destroy them off the world).

"R. Yanai said: 'If thou seest generation after generation (דור אחר דור) scorn and revile God (blaspheme), watch for the feet of the King Messiah. As it is written (Ps. lxxxix. 51): "Wherewith Thine enemies have reproached, O Lord; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of Thine Anointed." To which is added, "Blessed be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and Amen."'"<sup>1</sup>

## NOTE

### CUTH OR CUTHIM

Cuth and Cuthah are found in 2 Kings xvii. 30 and 24. It is stated that the King of Assyria brought men from Babylon and from Cuthah, etc., and "placed them in the cities of Samaria, instead of the children

<sup>1</sup> See also Tract. Sota. 156 (fol. 49a, b); Mishnah ix. 14.

of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof" (verse 24). They thus formed *one* nation with the inhabitants who were *left*. These were called "Cuthim" (כּוּתִים) by the Chaldeans and Talmudists, and, generally speaking, the latter, when referring to them, meant to imply little more than that they were "Goiim" or "idolaters," the common way of speaking of Gentiles (see Gesen. Lex. p. 389).

## CHAPTER XI

### TEN NOTABLE EVENTS WHEN MESSIAH COMES

THE Rabbis give a happy Scripture picture here, according to their conception, of the Millennium Kingdom after Messiah has come and Armageddon is past.

*All Things New.*—"This month shall be to you the beginning of months": as it is said (Isa. xlii. 9): "Behold the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare." For when Messiah comes things will be *new*.

For it is written (Eccles. i.): "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be." Now, we find *ten* things which God will make new when Messiah comes:—

(a) *The first* is, that God will give light to the world, as is said (Isa. lx. 19): "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither

for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee : but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." But can a man look upon God, the Holy One, blessed be He? But God will make the sun to shine seven times seven brighter, as is said (Isa. xxx. 26): "Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." Should then a man be sick, God will decree the sun to heal him, as is said (Mal. iv.): "But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings."

(b) *The second* event will be, that God will bring living water from Jerusalem and will heal with it every one who has disease, as is said (Ezek. xlvii.): "Everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the waters shall come, shall live."

(c) *The third* will be, that God will cause the trees to give their fruit every month, and the man who eats thereof will be healed, as is said: "And by the river upon the bank

thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed : it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters issued out of the *sanctuary* ; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."

(*d*) *The fourth* will be : They will build all waste cities, no more will there be a desolate place. Even Sodom and Gomorrah shall be rebuilt, when Messiah comes, as is said (Ezek. xvi. 55) : "When thy sisters Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former estate."

(*e*) *The fifth* will be : God will build Jerusalem with the sapphire stone, as is said : "Behold, I lay thy stones with fair colours" (Isa. liv. 11), as it is written : "And I will make thy windows agates" (verse 12), and the stones will give light as the sun ; and the nations will come to see the glory of Israel, as the text says : "And the nations shall come to thy light" (Isa. lx.).

(*f*) *The sixth* : "The cow and the bear shall feed."

(g) *The seventh*: God will bring all beasts and birds and creeping things, and will make a covenant with them and all Israel, as is said (Hos. ii.): "And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven."

(h) *The eighth*: There will be no more weeping and wailing, as is said (Isa. lxx.): "And the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying."

(i) *The ninth*: There will be no more death in the world, as is said (Isa. xxv.): "He will swallow up death in victory: and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces: and the rebuke of His people shall He take away."

(j) *The tenth*: There will be no more sighing, no cry, and no grief; *all will rejoice*, as is said (Isa. xxxv.): "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs" (Mid. Rab. Ex., Sect. 16).

*Blessing after Armageddon*.—Such is their catalogue or table of blessings in store for Israel and Judah, though they are well aware that all these glorious blessings can only come to pass *after* the war of Armageddon,

and that through much "tribulation" are they destined to enter into their kingdom. "When" the time will be they do not state; but *after* the war they are sure; e.g. R. Eleazar bar Abina voices his nation when he said: "If thou shalt see *wars* between *kings*, look out for the footsteps of the Messiah. Wouldst thou know the reason why? For, lo, in the days of Abram there was a war between kings, and *redemption came* (גאולה) (Gen. לך לך סב).

Or, again, the nation's longing is voiced by R. Huni in the name of R. Eleazar ben Joseph, who says: "The voice of *my beloved! behold, he cometh.*" This is the King Messiah (מלך המשיח) at the time when He says to Israel: "In this month ye shall be *redeemed*" (Song ii. 8).

## CHAPTER XII

### SIGNS OF THE TIMES

#### **Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Palestine**

EACH and all of these are an all-absorbing question for the Bible student and lover of prophecy at the present time. For the great war now being waged focuses attention and thought, with an ever increasing intensity, on these lands, *these old Bible lands*. Many are the questions that are being put just now. What will the end be? Is it Armageddon? Are the Jews going back to Palestine? These and other like questions are being asked on all sides by Jews and Gentiles alike. And without doubt this great upheaval amongst the nations—the rapid decay of Turkey—the strange and sinister alliance of Germany and Turkey, foreboding nothing but disaster in the near future to both—all this points, as

we shall see, to the close of the times of the Gentiles.

The irony of Germany's present position is that, being possessed with the worldly policy, the lust for *world power*, she yet considered that an alliance with prophetically doomed Turkey *was absolutely essential to her*. "Turkey," said Bernhardi, "the predominant Power of the Near East, is of paramount importance to us. She is our *natural ally*; it is emphatically our interest to keep in close touch with her." Germany has thus made grave mistakes: firstly, in ignoring or being utterly neglectful of the scriptural truth that never again will there be a single predominant world-power, a single world-monarchy after the type of Nebuchadnezzar, until the glorious Millennium Kingdom is set up, when the Lord Jesus shall return and rule and reign. Secondly, she is forgetful or careless of the fact that *Turkey's end* is near, and that the sands of the Gentile treading down of Jerusalem have almost run out. Whilst thirdly, an alliance with the great enemy of Christianity and of Christians during the past centuries, the Power that has trodden down the Holy Land

and kept in servitude of a kind the people whom God has called and will soon call again "My People," only invites the same condemnation, which will be sure and certain.

**To what extent has prophecy been fulfilled during the past few years?**

It will be helpful for us to answer this question.

The following sentences, pregnant with meaning, were written *thirty-six years ago* by a well-known writer on prophecy. He says: "When we consider the progress that has been made . . . during the last thirty or forty years, the elevation in the condition of the land and people of Israel, the removal of Jewish disabilities, the formation of the Israelite Alliance, the exploration of Palestine, *the decay of the Turkish power*, the increase of Missions, the opening up of China, Japan, and interior Africa, the revival of evangelical truth and effort in the Protestant Church, and the consequent revival and increase of missionary effort . . . *the spread of infidelity* in Christendom and the increase of ungodliness, the overthrow of despotisms and the establishment of demo-

cratic forms of government in their place ; we feel that, supposing we are still *thirty* or *forty* years distant from *the end of the age*, all that is predicted may come to pass in the interval.”<sup>1</sup> Now, this was written *thirty-six years ago*; may we not therefore ask ourselves, “ Then what of to-day ? ”

### Egypt

In thinking of this great, historic land we are unhesitatingly, and, as we believe, rightly too, led to apply Rev. xvi. 12 to Turkey, as we have previously shown. This sixth vial seems to have been pouring out for the last ninety-five years, and to have almost accomplished its appointed task ; i.e. taking the Euphrates as at present symbolic of Turkey, the power of Turkey is almost wasted away. This fact is worthy of the deepest attention, for the next stage brings into immediate view the Coming of the Lord and the gathering of the nations to Armageddon. The position of *modern Egypt* and its present relation to Turkey is a wonderful sign of the times, and most helpful to the Bible student, as are also prophecies connected with it which have yet to be fulfilled.

<sup>1</sup> Grattan Guinness.

Prophecy says much about Egypt, and one cannot help being struck with the fact that its punishment, desolation, and promised restoration in many respects approximate to those of Israel. It is truly a wonderful land. Taking its name "Mizraim" from the son of *Ham*, it was called "the land of Ham." It was a flourishing kingdom in Joseph's time, and of great antiquity. Its "wisdom" is mentioned in Acts vii. 22, though it has been called the "parent of superstition," the source of polytheism and idolatry to some Eastern and most Western nations. Its worship is said to have finally become so "monstrous and beastly" that it is difficult to find a parallel elsewhere. Thus at last it came under judgment by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Ezek. xxix. 19). It has had its fill of *civil war*. Conquered by the Babylonians and afterwards by the Persians, it became later subject to *the Macedonians*, and in turn to *the Romans*, then to the *Saracens* under Omar, later to the *Mamaluks*, and finally to the *Othman* Empire under Selim, the ninth Emperor of the Turks, in 1516, who annexed Syria, *Egypt*, and all the dominions of the Mamaluks.

The ancient history of Egypt and its chequered career, its intimate connection with the Jewish people and its *present condition*, are in absolute accord with the word of God at the present time and serve as a wonderful object-lesson to faith.

*Egypt and Prophecy.*—Three special prophecies assert of Egypt that—

(a) “It shall be the basest of (or *lower than*) the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself *any more* above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall *no more* rule over the nations” (Ezek. xxix. 15).

(b) “And there shall be *no more* a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt” (Ezek. xxx. 13)—  
וְנָשִׂיא מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יִהְיֶה עוֹד.

(c) “And the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away”—וְשֵׁבֶט מִצְרַיִם יָסוּר (Zech. x. 11).

Now, when we consider the Egypt of to-day in the light of these prophecies, what a study for faith is before us, for how perfectly they have been and are being fulfilled. For Britain's intimate connection with Egypt since 1882 is well known, and the formal declaration of the British Protectorate has been

made,<sup>1</sup> so that the country now forms part of the British Empire. The Turkish flag has entirely disappeared from Africa, and Egypt is on the way to becoming one of the self-governing dominions of the British Empire, and may become one of the foremost of the Oriental countries. Besides the loss to Turkey of all hold on Egypt, "the result of recent Balkan wars was to take away a great deal of European territory from Constantinople, inasmuch as Servia, Bulgaria, and Greece alike made and enforced claims on behalf of their impoverished and persecuted Christian subjects."<sup>2</sup> And the "drying up" continues even beyond this, for of most absorbing interest is the latest development politically in other quarters, showing how her dismemberment goes on apace. Cyprus has been annexed, and the geographical position of this island with reference to Palestine is most suggestive, as we shall later see.

### Mesopotamia

But perhaps most striking of all to the Bible student is the capture of Basra, at the

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, December 19, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

head of the Persian Gulf, and the delta of the Tigris and Euphrates, by a British expeditionary force, which is pushing forward up the valley into Mesopotamia, to Bagdad itself. Here we see the land promised to Abraham, Gen. xv. 18—here we are near the home of ancient Babylon, whilst further north is Nineveh, that ancient city, the great metropolis of the Assyrian Empire.

### Palestine

Further, as we study the map we are struck with the dominating position of powerful influence that Britain, in God's providence, holds with reference to Palestine. On the western seaboard she holds Cyprus, and Egypt further south. On the east she is advancing up the Mesopotamian Valley, as we have seen, whilst Palestine—the Holy Land—is thus *between the two spheres of influence*. Surely “it is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.”

Britain, with its kindly interest in the Jews, may she not soon be the honoured instrument used by God to further their return to the land of their fathers? May it not be that

she who has been so used in blessing to Egypt,<sup>1</sup> may also be used in bringing to some fulfilment the striking passage Isa. xix. 23-25: "In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria; and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance."

If, too, the coming of "the kings from the east" is symbolic of a new Power or Powers in place of Turkey, the Return of the Jews to their own land is, without doubt, imminent. For, as the drying up of the Red Sea and the drying up of Jordan were God's prepared ways for His people of old into blessing, so we believe "the drying up of the Euphrates" is symbolic of the Jewish Return from their world-wide captivity to the land—a nearer stage to this longed-for consummation—symbolic, too, of the immediate Return

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

of the Lord Jesus for His Church, and His subsequent return to establish His glorious Millennium Kingdom. And who can doubt that Egypt and Assyria shall be the first, as they are its immediate neighbours north and south, to experience to the full the glorious spiritual refreshings promised again and again in that age? For then the division of these old-world rivers will be done away. The river of blessing will belong to "either side" — "*on either side of the river*" will be life, fruit, healing, if we may use the simile (cf. Rev. xxii. 2).

On either side of *the Nile*, blessing, life, fruit, healing—eternal.

On either side of *the Euphrates*—life, fruit, healing — eternal — flowing from Jerusalem, high and lifted up. And though we may seem to anticipate somewhat, other signs point to the imminence of the end of the age. With the removal of Turkey, Russia, the great northern Power, looms large in the near future. She lies direct north of Palestine geographically, and has at the present time great influence in North Persia; and the overthrow of the Turks and the occupation

of Constantinople at the end of the war would almost certainly, as it seems, bring Armenia and Kurdistan, that old site of the Assyrian kingdom, under her control, and put her in the position of being in every sense "King of the North."

*Now* is a grievous time for Jacob—but it is not the time of "Jacob's trouble." Though if this be done in the green tree, what will it be in the dry? Who can bear the thought?

*To-day* the Gentile nations are warring against each other, and "Jacob" is in the midst, largely in Poland, but then at Armageddon the great northern nation with many another will gather round Judah and Jerusalem, for Jerusalem is to be the "cup of trembling" and the "burdensome stone for all people" (Zech. xii. 2, 3).

*To-day* we see "the mystery of iniquity" (2 Thess. ii. 7) working in such visible manifestation as never before, especially in its phase of the cult of "frightfulness," advocated by the nation privileged to be the "birth-place" and "home" of the great Protestant Reformation, whilst the near future holds

promise of the Papal See working hand in hand with the same Power (Rev. xvi. 13).

*God is working His Purpose out.*—We have seen the former rain, Pentecost with its glorious fruit down the centuries, and in large measure we are experiencing now the grace of “the latter rain in its due season” in the many conversions on land and sea, among friends and foes alike. “God is working His purpose out,” and His purpose is salvation. Now, when we see these things we look *up*, for *our* redemption draweth nigh.

And Israel, too, may look up, for when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in all Israel shall be saved (Rom. xi. 25, 26).

#### NOTE

Egypt's indebtedness to Britain is shown in a striking way by the following catalogue, compiled by a native writer, of the blessings which have been brought to the *fellaheen* under the British rule:—

“(1) The British abolished for me the accursed torture of the *courbache*, enabling me to live longer for my children than my unfortunate father was able to live for me and my brothers.

"(2) The British have protected me from tyrants.

"(3) Thanks to them, I pay no taxes which I ought not to pay.

"(4) I am no more harnessed to the plough, as I formerly was, to gratify the caprice or pleasure of the cruel Turks.

"(5) Thanks to the British, I no longer behold lying on the ground, bathed in blood, the body of my beloved wife, the innocent companion of my misfortunes and sufferings, a homicide which was formerly committed with impunity and relish throughout Egypt. The only relief for me then was to let my heart weep, for I dared not weep publicly.

"(6) Thanks to the British, I enjoy my frugal evening meal surrounded by my children, and I am clad in winter better than in summer.

"(7) Thanks to the British, my young cotton plants do not die from want of water as formerly, when water was only given abundantly to rich proprietors at a high price, while we poor *fellaheen*, having nothing to offer, saw our plants dying of drought."—*Scotsman*, October 18, 1914.

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